

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-4: Cancelled

5. (Currently Amended) A method of fabricating an optical fiber pumped through [the] a cladding, [characterized in that it consists in executing the following steps] comprising:

[-] placing around a central optical preform [(1, 11)] including a core [(2, 12)] having an index n1 surrounded by a first cladding [(3, 13)] having an index n2 lower than n1, a plurality of rods, which will form a second cladding of the optical fiber, the rods [(4, 9, 15)] having an index n3 lower than n2, and

[-] drawing the optical preform and the rods to obtain [an] the optical fiber including a core and two claddings comprising the first cladding and the second cladding.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein optical preforms [(7)] with claddings having an index n3 are used as the [bars] rods placed around the central optical preform.

7. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein the central optical preform [(11)] is, after drawing, an optical fiber pumped through the cladding consisting of a core having an index n1, a first cylindrical cladding of circular section surrounding the core and having an index n2 lower than n1, and a second cylindrical cladding of circular section surrounding the first cladding and having an index n3.

8. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein the central optical preform and the rods having an index n3 are placed in a sleeve [(5, 16)] within which [the] an atmosphere is controlled for drawing by establishing a vacuum or a partial pressure of neutral gases [such as helium] or reagents [such as C₂F₆].

9. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 8, [characterized in that] wherein the sleeve is made of silica whose index has been reduced by appropriate doping[, for example with fluorine or boron].

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein the interstices between the rods [(15)] having an index n3 are filled and [the] an atmosphere in [the] a volume delimited by the rods is controlled for drawing by establishing a vacuum or a partial pressure of neutral gases [such as helium] or reagents [such as C₂F₆].

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein the second cladding is enveloped in a low-index polymer coating [(20)].

12. (New) A method according to claim 8, wherein the neutral gases are helium.

13. (New) A method according to claim 8, wherein the reagents are C₂F₆.

14. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the doping is with fluorine.
15. (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the doping is with boron.
16. (New) A method according to claim 10, wherein the neutral gases are helium.
17. (New) A method according to claim 10, wherein the reagents are C_2F_6 .